help of the Marketing Division at Guwahati, the AIR stations in Assam and North-Eastern Region have been able to increase their commercial revenue.

Besides, All India Radio has already allowed concession upto 50% on commercial rates to NGOs/Voluntary Organisations for promoting Public Service Broadcasting on various Radio Stations of Assam and the North-Eastern Region *viz.* Halflong, Jorhat, Diphu, Kokrajhar, Belonia, Gangtok, Jowai, Kailashahar, Mokokchung, Kohima, Tezu, Tura etc. in order to make the stations of this region commercially viable to some extent.

Study on ITIs conducted by FICCI

1160. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken cognizance of the study on ITIs conducted by FICCI;

(b) if so, what are the main conclusions of the study;

(c) whether the study also commented upon the quality of courses and training offered by the ITIs;

(d) whether the study offered solutions to improve the quality of training, if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have agreed with such solutions; and

(f) if so, what steps are being taken to implement them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) to (f) Main conclusions of the study carried out by FICCI show that while situation with regard to physical infrastructure and availability of power supply remains comfortable, factors like non-availability of computerized numerically controlled machines, inadequate supplies of raw material and lack of focus on staff training and development are key impediments in the strengthening of these institutions.

Some of the suggestions given by FICCI are introduce courses which have larger employment potential, fill up vacancies of instructors, have effective and vigilant monitoring system, strengthen industry- institute linkage, provide functional autonomy to the institute, update syllabi of trades, train instructors and staff of institutes, introduce training in soft skills and strengthen testing and certification norms to global standards etc.

Government have taken following initiatives in this regard:

(i) In the last ten years, course curricula of 57 trades have been revised, 50 new trades introduced in consultation with Industry and 11 trades for which demand did not exist have been dropped.

(ii) The deficiencies pointed out by FICCI study are being addressed through upgradation of Government ITIs under World Bank assisted Vocational Training Improvement Project and scheme of up gradation of 1396 Government ITIs through Public Private Partnership.

Increasing child labourers in the era of liberalisation

†1161. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated number of child labourers at present in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that in the era of liberalization also, the number of child labourers has increased by 10 per cent;

(c) whether it is also a fact that most of the child labourers rescued from bonded labour meet the same fate again in the absence of guarantee for rehabilitation from the State Government; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by Government to eradicate this problem of child labour?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) As per the latest Census 2001, the number of child labour in the country is 1.26 crore.

(b) As per the figures of Census 2001, there was an increase of about 10% in the number of child labourers in the country as compared to 1991 Census.

(c) Under the Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour grants are released to the State Governments for rehabilitation of identified/ rdeased bonded labours on 50:50 sharing basis including bonded child labour. State Governments are advised from time to time for follow up of the cases, rehabilitated by them, so that no occasion of relapse is reported.

(d) Government is implementing the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme in 250 districts of 20 States of the country for the rehabilitation of children withdrawn from hazardous occupations. Under the scheme, these children are put into special schools where they are provided with accelerated bridging education, vocational training, mid-day meal, stipend and health care facilities etc.

Denial of social security to people in unorganized sector

1162. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that many industries in the unorganized sector refuse to issue appointment letter to its employees;

(b) if so, whether this is causing denial of EPF and ESI benefits to large sections of working people;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.